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SUBJECT: DRC ELECTIONS: EMINENT PERSONS GROUP URGES CALM  
DURING WAIT FOR RESULTS

11. (U) The International Committee of Wise Men ("Comite des Sages") issued August 12 a declaration congratulating the Congolese people and authorities for the calm and peaceful manner in which the country's July 30 elections were held. The Committee urged political candidates and the population to respect the DRC's electoral law, reminding all that the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) is the sole organization authorized to declare election results. The Committee further appealed to all political actors to remain patient while results are being compiled, and said that any challenges to the election process should be presented to the appropriate and competent authorities. The Committee reminded the Congolese as well to consider the enormous challenges facing the CEI in organizing the elections and to recognize the difference between organized fraud and "imperfections" in the electoral process. In addition, the Committee recommended against anyone issuing misleading statements that could undermine the security and well-being of the country and its people.

12. (U) The International Committee of Wise Men, a group of eminent persons created following an appeal by the DRC's five transitional citizen institutions (the CEI, the High Media Authority, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Commission on Ethics and the Fight Against Corruption, and the National Observatory for Human Rights), is chaired by the former President of Mozambique Joaquim Chissano. The Committee's role is to support, through its moral authority, the aforementioned institutions during the pre- and post-election period, with the goals of restoring an atmosphere of confidence and peace through the end of the electoral process and of aiding the peaceful resolution of potential election conflicts. The Committee was established to provide advice (which has no legal standing) to any political actors who wish to consult its members.

13. (U) Post's unofficial translation of the declaration from the original French follows:

#### DECLARATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF WISE MEN

We, the International Committee of Wise Men, repeat our congratulations to the population and Congolese authorities for the holding of presidential and legislative elections July 30, 2006. These historic elections took place with calm and dignity following an electoral campaign of good quality. They saw an exceptional level of participation and they were saluted by the international community in its entirety through the multiple international observers present in the Congo.

Now is the time to wait for results. In this context, it is



of the highest importance that the people and the candidates, conforming to the spirit that marked the electoral campaign and the vote, continue to respect the different measures in the electoral law, notably concerning the proclamation of results. The announcement of results is the exclusive responsibility of the Independent Electoral Commission and their validation is solely the work of the Supreme Court.

According to the information received by the International Committee of Wise Men, the announcement of results by the Independent Electoral Commission will take place no later than August 20, 2006, at the end of the centralization and compilation of results obtained from nearly 50,000 polling stations. It is a long and complex process. The Independent Electoral Commission has now committed itself to keep the public informed of the state of advancement of the counting process.

While awaiting these results, the International Committee of Wise Men appeals for calm and responsibility on the part of everyone. It invites the population and the candidates not to give any credence to various speculation.

Particularly concerning the candidates, the International Committee of Wise Men would like to focus their attention on the difference that can exist between electoral fraud and imperfections or irregularities in a country the size of the Democratic Republic of Congo, which is organizing for the first time in decades voting operations of this size.

Moreover, if verifiable acts of fraud are known, the International Committee of Wise Men recommends to presidential and legislative candidates who would have complaints to make, to do so through the competent

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authorities, notably the Independent Electoral Commission. The International Committee of Wise Men itself can be asked consider the laws and regulations in effect in the Democratic Republic of Congo by electoral candidates and by the Institutions for the Support of Democracy. The Committee is at the disposition of candidates and the competent authorities in the DRC in order to help them find the best solutions.

The International Committee of Wise Men recommends to all, in the interest of the Congolese people and the future of the country, not to do anything of a nature to mislead the population and undermine the security of property and of people.

We repeat our appeal to all political groups, to all civil society organizations, and finally to all citizens of the Democratic Republic of Congo to do everything to assure an atmosphere of peace and calm in order to permit the restoration of confidence between Congolese and the creation of a consensus that can assure stability and the beginning of national reconstruction. Let us think of the present and the future of the children and of all those who live in extreme poverty. Let us give them the opportunity to march confidently towards a better future.

End text.  
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